

Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-03 H-03 PA-04 PRS-01 CU-04 SS-20

NSC-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 IO-14 INRE-00

SSO-00 NSCE-00 CPR-02 DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 014907

O 181109Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9460

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL DURBAN IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG IMMEDIATE

USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, SF, US

SUBJ: RACIAL INCIDENTS INVOLVING USIA OFFICIAL

REF: PRETORIA 1085

1. FORMAL NOTE OF PROTEST DELIVERED TO DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS THIS MORNING AND RECEIVED BY PRIVATE SECRETARY TO FONMIN FULLER, WHO HAS JUST RETURNED TO SOUTH AFRICA.

2. STORIES OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING SAUNDERS HAVE APPEARED IN ENGLISH-LANGUAGE, BUT NOT IN AFRIKAANS, NEWSPAPERS YESTERDAY AND TODAY. MARCH 18 JOHANNESBURG STAR HAD ARTICLE ON INSIDE PAGE. THIS MORNING'S RAND DAILY MAIL FEATURED STORY ON FRONT PAGE WITH HEADLINE, "ANGER RISES AT SNUB TO U.S. ENVOY." MAIL ARTICLE SAID "THE U.S. GOVERNMENT IS VIEWING IN A SERIOUS LIGHT THE INCIDENT IN DURBAN ON FRIDAY NIGHT WHEN A BLACK AMERICAN INFORMATION OFFICIAL, MR. RICHARD SAUNDERS, AND HIS WIFE WERE TOLD TO LEAVE A LOCAL NIGHT CLUB BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT WHITE." ARTICLE WENT ON TO NOTE THAT STATE DEPARTMENT IN WASHINGTON HAD SAID USG WAS ASKING FOR A FULL EXPLANATION AND THAT EMBASSY

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"TAKING THE MATTER UP WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS."

3. MAIL'S DURBAN CORRESPONDENT REPORTS THAT SECOND INCIDENT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST SAUNDERS WAS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT FROM SECOND-HAND REPORT WE HAD RECEIVED (SAUNDERS HAS BEEN UPCOUNTRY IN KWAZULU SINCE EARLY YESTERDAY). ACCORDING TO MAIL, SAUNDERS AND INDIAN JOURNALIST WERE ASKED BY WAITER TO LEAVE HOTEL LOUNGE. THEY REFUSED. SAME WAITER LATER APPROACHED THEM AND AGAIN ASKED THEM TO LEAVE. SAUNDERS ONCE MORE REFUSED AND SUBSEQUENTLY ANOTHER WAITER APOLOGIZED.

4. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AMBASSADOR'S NOTE TO FONMIN:

"EXCELLENCY:

A. "I REGRET TO BRING TO YOUR ATTENTION TWO INCIDENTS OF DISCRIMINATORY TREATMENT OF AN OFFICIAL OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WHILE HE WAS IN SOUTH AFRICA.

B. "MR. RICHARD SAUNDERS, ACCOMPANIED BY MRS. SAUNDERS, HAS BEEN IN SOUTH AFRICA SINCE FEBRUARY 27, 1974. MR. SAUNDERS IS AN OFFICIAL OF THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE AND IS IN SOUTH AFRICA ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS IN CONNECTION WITH EXHIBITS OF HIS PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK AND LECTURES HE HAS BEEN GIVING TO JOURNALISTS.

C. "ON MARCH 15, MR. AND MRS. SAUNDERS ARRIVED AT DURBAN. THEY WENT TO THE BLUE WATERS HOTEL, WHERE THEIR BOOKINGS WERE CONFIRMED AND THEY WERE WELCOMED. THAT NIGHT THE SAUNDERS MET WITH SEVERAL SOUTH AFRICAN JOURNALISTS AT THE BLUE WATERS FOR DRINKS AND DINNER. AFTER THEY HAD BEEN SEATED, HOWEVER, THEY WERE INFORMED BY THE MAITRE D'HOTEL THAT THE PARTICULAR PUBLIC ROOM WHERE THEY HAD GONE TO EAT WAS CLOSED TO NON-WHITES. AFTER THE SOUTH AFRICANS WITH THE SAUNDERS HAD INTERVENED, THE PARTY WAS INFORMED THAT THEY COULD DINE BUT THAT THEY MUST NOT DANCE, SINCE BLACK AND WHITE COUPLES WERE UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES PERMITTED ON A PUBLIC DANCE FLOOR.

D. "THE SECOND INCIDENT OCCURRED DURING THE AFTERNOON OF THE FOLLOWING DAY. WHEN A REPORTER FROM DRUM MAGAZINE CAME TO THE HOTEL TO INTERVIEW MR. SAUNDERS, IT WAS SUGGESTED BY THE HOTEL MANAGEMENT THAT THEY CONDUCT THE INTERVIEW IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HOTEL LOUNGE. WHILE THERE THEY ATTEMPTED TO ORDER REFRESHMENTS. HOWEVER, BECAUSE THEY WERE NON-WHITES THEY WERE UNABLE TO GET SERVED.

E. "I WISH TO PROTEST THE INDIGNITIES AND HUMILIATION THAT MR. AND MRS. SAUNDERS HAVE SUFFERED. I DEPLORE THE FACT THAT ANY AMERICAN GUESTS IN SOUTH AFRICA WOULD BE SUBJECTED TO SUCH TREATMENT. IT IS ESPECIALLY REGRETTABLE THAT A UNITED STATES

GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL, WHO HAD COME TO SOUTH AFRICA FOR THE SPECIFIC PURPOSE OF ENGAGING IN THE KIND OF COMMUNICATION WE HAVE ENCOURAGED BETWEEN AMERICANS AND SOUTH AFRICANS, SHOULD EXPERIENCE SUCH UNWARRANTED INDIGNITIES.

F. "I WOULD BE GRATEFUL IF THE SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT WOULD LOOK INTO THIS MATTER WITH A VIEW TO PREVENTING THE OCCURRENCE OF INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND.

G. "ACCEPT, EXCELLENCY, THE RENEWED ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION."
HURD

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